

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A communication assistance system (2) for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers (6), the system comprising:
  - a telephone switch (12) for receiving calls from a plurality of requesters (4) desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers (6);
  - a first database (18) configured to store said information corresponding to each of said subscribers (6), including phone numbers of each of said subscribers; and
  - a closing prompt module (27) coupled to said first database so as to generate a closing prompt code from a plurality of available closing prompt codes associated with desired closing prompt messages for said requesters(4).
2. The system according to claim 1, wherein said closing prompt messages are in accordance with a text format from a list of formats including WAP and SMS.
3. The system in accordance with claim 1, further comprising a call center(16) coupled to said switch (12) for routing each of said received calls from said requester to an operator terminal (20).

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4. The system in accordance with claim 1, further comprising an operator terminal (20) operated by a customer representative to retrieve information stored in said first database (18).

5. The system in accordance with claim 1, further comprising an automated operator terminal (20) so as to automatically retrieve information stored in said first database (18).

6. The system in accordance with claim 3, wherein a requester's (4) call to a subscriber (6) is routed back to one of said operator terminals in the event said requester's call to a subscriber is not completed.

7. The system in accordance with claim 1, wherein said database comprises a listing table (52A) associated with each of said subscribers, said listing table further comprises a wireless phone number field adapted wireless phone numbers of said subscribers.

8. The system in accordance with claim 1, wherein said database comprises a listing table (52A) associated with each of said subscribers, said listing table further comprises a Special Announcement field adapted to store a closing prompt code associated with a Special Announcement closing prompt that said subscriber desires to provide to each one of said requesters.

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9. The system in accordance with claim 8, wherein said listing table further comprises a General announcement field adapted to store a closing prompt code associated with a General Announcement closing prompt intended to be provided to said requesters.

10. The system in accordance with claim 8, wherein said listing table is searchable.

11. The system in accordance with claim 8, wherein said Special Announcement represents a recorded message associated with said subscriber.

12. The system in accordance with claim 9, wherein said General Announcement represents a recorded message associated with type of service said subscriber provides.

13. The system in accordance with claim 8, wherein said Special Announcement represents marketing messages corresponding to services offered by said subscribers.

14. The system in accordance with claim 8, wherein said Special Announcement closing prompt is an audio message.

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15. The system in accordance with claim 8, wherein said Special Announcement closing prompt is a multimedia message.
16. The system in accordance with claim 8, wherein said Special Announcement represents information corresponding to additional services provided relating to said subscriber.
17. The system in accordance with claim 16, wherein said subscriber is a goods or service provider and said Special Announcement corresponds to an invitation to a requester to order said goods or services.
18. The system in accordance with claim 17, wherein said goods are tickets to an event, including movies.
19. The system in accordance with claim 17, wherein said subscriber is a restaurant and said Special Announcement is invitation to make reservations to said restaurant.
20. The system in accordance with claim 1, further comprising a closing prompt storage module (13) coupled to said closing prompt module and configured to store a plurality of closing prompt messages each of which is associated with a closing prompt code provided by said closing prompt module (13).

21. The system in accordance with claim 20, further comprising an override module (66) coupled to said closing prompt module, said override module generating closing prompt codes corresponding to announcements provided by administrators of said communications assistance system.

22. The system in accordance with claim 21, wherein said announcements provided by administrators of said communications assistance system comprises cross-selling announcements relating to other features and services provided by said communications assistance system.

23. The system in accordance with claim 20, wherein said closing prompt module generates a call completion data packet (50) to be transmitted to said telephone switch, said call completion data packet further comprising originating phone number of the requester, telephone number of the subscriber and closing prompt codes corresponding to closing prompt messages intended to be provided to said requester.

24. The system in accordance with claim 23, wherein said closing prompt module further comprises a call completion data table that stores information necessary for populating said call completion data packet.

25. A directory assistance system for providing subscriber information to requesters (4) communicating with said assistance system, comprising:

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a telephone switch (12) for receiving calls from a plurality of requesters (4) desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers;

a first database (18) configured to store said information corresponding to each of said subscribers, including phone numbers associated with each of said subscribers; and

a communications interface (32) for database clean-up, said interface configured to receive instructions from said subscribers (6) so as to allow said subscribers to modify their corresponding information in said first database (18).

26. The system in accordance with claim 25, further comprising a call center (16) coupled to said switch for routing each of said received calls from said requester to an operator terminal (20).

27. The system in accordance with claim 25, further comprising an operator terminal operated by a customer representative so as to retrieve information stored in said database (18).

28. The system in accordance with claim 25, further comprising an automated operator terminal (20) so as to automatically retrieve information stored in said database (18).

29. The system in accordance with claim 25, wherein said communications interface is coupled to a carrier customer care representative system configured to receive phone calls from said subscribers.

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30. The system in accordance with claim 29, further comprising a carrier clean-up database (30) coupled to said customer care representative system configured to store said modified information received from said subscribers.

31. The system in accordance with claim 30, wherein said communications interface unit (32) further comprising a synchronization technology unit coupled to said clean-up database unit, said synchronization technology unit further coupled to said first database, and configured to synchronize said subscriber modifications with data stored in said first database.

32. The system in accordance with claim 25, further comprising an Internet clean-up database (34) coupled to said communications interface for receiving and storing modified information received from said subscribers via Internet.

33. The system in accordance with claim 32, wherein said communications interface include a synchronization technology unit so as to synchronize said stored modified data with data stored in said first database.

34. The system in accordance with claim 25, further comprising a reward database (75) configured to store reward information corresponding to a plurality of said subscribers who modified their information.

35. The system in accordance with claim 25, further comprising a master clean-up database (40) coupled to said communications interface unit, configured to receive and store modifications of subscriber information.

36. The system in accordance with claim 35, wherein said communications interface comprising a synchronization technology unit coupled to said master clean-up database said synchronization technology unit further coupled to said first database, and configured to synchronize said subscriber modifications with data stored in said first database.

37. The system in accordance with claim 36, further comprising a reward database configured to store reward information corresponding to a plurality of said subscribers who modified their information.

38. A communication assistance system (2) for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers, the system comprising:

a telephone switch (12) for receiving calls from a plurality of requesters (4) desiring access to said information corresponding to subscribers (6) ;



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a database (18) configured to store said information corresponding to each of said subscribers, including phone numbers of each of said subscribers; and

a dial string translator configured to receive dial strings dialed by said plurality of requesters (4) and translate said received dial strings to a corresponding digit sequence associated with a service provided by said communication assistance system (2).

39. The system in accordance with claim 38, further comprising a call center (16) coupled to said switch for routing each of said received calls from said requester to an operator terminal that has access to said database (18).

40. The system in accordance with claim 38, further comprising an operator terminal (20) operated by a customer representative, so as to retrieve information stored in said database (18).

41. The system in accordance with claim 38, further comprising an automated operator terminal (20) so as to automatically retrieve information stored in said database (18).

42. The system in accordance with claim 38, wherein said dial string translator generates a digital string within said digit sequence that represents a telephone carrier switching center handling a call made by each one of said requesters.

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43. The system in accordance with claim 39, wherein said dial string translator generates a digital string within said digit sequence that represents a specific language to be utilized by said system when communicating with said requester.

44. The system in accordance with claim 43, wherein said call center routes a requester's phone call to an operator terminal handled by a customer representative who is capable of conversing in said specific language.

45. The system in accordance with claim 44, wherein said switch is configured to generate an incoming call information record containing a preferred language code field to store said dial string associated with said specific language.

46. The system in accordance with claim 45, wherein said call information record further comprises a number dialed by requester field to store the number dialed by each one of said requesters.

47. The system in accordance with claim 46, wherein said call information record further comprises an originating phone number of requester field to store the number from which each one of said requesters has dialed.

48. The system in accordance with claim 43, further comprising a plurality of said call centers (16) remotely connected together via a communications channel, each of said

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call centers capable of routing a received phone call from each one of said requesters to another one of said call centers (16').

49. The system in accordance with claim 43, wherein said database is searched to retrieve at least one subscriber who communicates in said specific language.

50. A billing system for a communication assistance system (2) that provides access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers (6), the system (2) comprising:

a telephone switch (12) for receiving calls from a plurality of requesters (4) desiring access to said information corresponding to subscribers;

a database (18) configured to store said information corresponding to each of said subscribers (6), including phone numbers of each of said subscribers; and

a billing record database (14) coupled to said switch (12) configured to store information corresponding to amount of time requester (4) was connected to each one of said subscribers (6).

51. The system in accordance with claim 50, further comprising a call center (16) coupled to said switch for routing each of said received calls from said requester to an operator terminal (20).

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52. The system in accordance with claim 50, further comprising an operator terminal operated by a customer representative so as to retrieve information stored in said database (18).

53. The system in accordance with claim 50, further comprising an automated operator terminal (20) so as to automatically retrieve information stored in said database (18).

54. The system in accordance with claim 51, wherein said billing record database coupled to said switch is additionally coupled to said operator terminal.

55. The system in accordance with claim 51, wherein said billing record database further comprises information corresponding to each service provider that respectively handled a call between a requester and a subscriber.

56. The system in accordance with claim 55, wherein said billing record database is configured to send information stored relating to billing records to a service provider that handled said call for said requester, so as to bill said requester for charges associated with said call between said requester and said subscriber.

57. The system in accordance with claim 56, wherein said charges include airtime utilized by said subscriber during said call between said requester and said subscriber and

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directory look-up and connection charges, roaming and toll charges associated with airtime use of said subscriber.

58. The system in accordance with claim 57, wherein said communication assistance system provides instructions to said subscriber's service provider such that said subscriber is not billed for said call.

59. The system in accordance with claim 57, wherein telephone number of said subscriber is omitted from said requester's bill.

60. The system in accordance with claim 58, wherein said communication assistance system handles distribution of funds collected by said requester's service provider to said subscriber's service provider.

61. The system in accordance with claim 58, wherein said communication assistance system handles distribution of funds collected by said requester's service provider to all service providers that contributed in handling said call between said requester and said subscriber.

62. The system in accordance with claim 61, wherein said subscriber's service provider for handling said call to said subscriber is also said requester's wireless carrier.

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63. A communication assistance system (2) for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers (6), the system comprising:
- a telephone switch (12) for receiving calls from a plurality of requesters desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers (6);
  - a listing database (18) configured to store said information corresponding to each of said subscribers, including phone numbers of each of said subscribers and a connect field that stores information instructing said communication assistance system as to whether to disclose a subscriber's phone number to a requester (4).
64. The system in accordance with claim 63, further comprising a call center(16) coupled to said switch for routing each of said received calls from said requester to an operator terminal (20) that has access to said database listing table (18).
65. The system in accordance with claim 64, further comprising a plurality of said call centers (16) remotely connected together via a communications channel, each of said call centers capable of routing a received phone call from each one of said requesters to another one of said call centers (16').
66. The system in accordance with claim 64, wherein said operator terminal is operated by a customer representative.

67. The system in accordance with claim 64, wherein said operator terminal is automated.

68. The system in accordance with claim 64, wherein said connect field further comprises information instructing said communication assistance system as to whether to disclose said subscriber's phone number to a customer representative who is handling a request from a requester.

69. The system in accordance with claim 68, wherein said listing database further comprises a pre-announcement field (59) that contains instruction information as to whether a subscriber requires to be notified of a requester's identification information before completing a call from said requester to said subscriber.

70. The system in accordance with claim 69, wherein said communications assistance system further comprises means to receive instructions from said subscriber as to whether to accept a call originated from said requester.

71. The system in accordance with claim 69, wherein said communications assistance system further comprises means to receive instructions from said subscriber as to whether to reject a call originated from said requester.

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72. The system in accordance with claims 71, wherein said communications assistance system further comprises a means to receive instructions from said subscriber to direct a call from a requester directly to said subscriber's voicemail.

73. The system in accordance with claim 71, wherein said communication assistance system further comprises a means to store in said listing database instructions from said subscriber to permanently reject all incoming calls from said individual requester.

74. The system in accordance with claim 71, or 72 or 73 wherein said communication assistance system provides an automated response to said requester, when said call is rejected by said subscriber.

75. The system in accordance with claim 71, or 72 or 73 wherein said communication assistance system delivers a pre-recorded response to said requester, recorded by said subscriber, when said call is rejected by said subscriber.

76. A communication assistance system (2) for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers, the system comprising:

a telephone switch (12) for receiving calls from a plurality of requesters (4) desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers (6);

a listing database (18) configured to store said information corresponding to each of said subscribers, including phone numbers of each of said subscribers; and



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a processor configured to transmit notification messages to said subscribers so as to receive updates for each listing corresponding to each one of said subscribers.

77. The system in accordance with claim 76, further comprising a call center (16) coupled to said switch for routing each of said received calls from said requester to an operator terminal (20) that has access to said listing database (18).

78. The system in accordance with claim 76, further comprising an operator terminal operated by a customer representative so as to retrieve information stored in said database (18).

79. The system in accordance with claim 76, further comprising an automated operator terminal so as to automatically retrieve information stored in said database (18).

80. The system in accordance with claim 76, wherein said notification messages to said subscribers is transmitted after a designated period lapsed since a prior notification message.

81. The system is accordance with claim 76, wherein said listing updates are received via Internet.

82. The system in accordance with claim 76, wherein said processor transmits said notification messages in response to a listing error discovered in said listing database.

83. The system in accordance with claim 76, further comprising a service provider (26) configured to handle calls made by a plurality of said subscribers, said service provider transmitting modification messages to said telephone switch corresponding to changes associated with said directory listing of each of said subscribers.

84. The system in accordance with claim 76, further comprising a communication interface unit configured to receive modification signals from said subscribers so as to modify said directory listing corresponding to each one of said subscribers.

85. The system in accordance with claim 84, wherein said modification messages corresponding to each of said subscribers are transmitted via a plurality of communication channels from a list including voice and data channels, WAP, SMS, instant messaging and live chat.

86. The system in accordance with claim 84, further comprising a reward database configured to track rewards offered to each one of said subscribers who modify a corresponding one of said directory listing.

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87. The system in accordance with claim 84, further comprising a Voice Response Unit configured to receive phone calls from said subscribers who modify a corresponding one of said directory listing in response to prompts provided by said Voice Response Unit.

88. The system in accordance with claim 87, wherein said Voice Response Unit is configured to record responses made by said subscribers who modify a corresponding one of said directory listing via interaction with a customer representative.

89. The system in accordance with claim 76, wherein said notification messages are transmitted via a plurality of communication channels from a list including voice and data channels, WAP, SMA, instant messaging and live chat.

90. The system in accordance with claim 76, further comprising a second database comprising personal contact listings of each one of said subscribers.

91. The system in accordance with claim 90, wherein said processor populates said first database with information contained in said second database.

92. A communication assistance system (2) for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers, the system comprising:

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a telephone switch (12) for receiving calls from a plurality of requesters (4) desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers (6); and

a first database (18) configured to store said information corresponding to each of said subscribers, including phone numbers of each of said subscribers and license plate number corresponding to said subscriber's vehicle.

93. The system in accordance with claim 92, further comprising a call center (16) coupled to said switch for routing each of said received calls from said requester to an operator terminal (20).

94. The system in accordance with claim 92, further comprising an operator terminal (20) operated by a customer representative so as to retrieve information stored in said database (18).

95. The system in accordance with claim 92, further comprising an automated operator terminal so as to automatically retrieve information stored in said database (18).

96. The system in accordance with claim 92, further comprising a processor for searching said first database against said license plate number so as to retrieve other information stored corresponding to each of said subscribers.

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97. A communication assistance system (2) for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers (6), the system comprising:
- a telephone switch (12) for receiving calls from a plurality of requesters (4) desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers; and
  - a database directory listing (18) storing information corresponding to each one of said subscribers, said information including a Special Services field associated with services provided by said subscriber, so as to allow a search of said database against any one of said services.
98. The system in accordance with claim 97, further comprising a call center (16) coupled to said switch for routing each of said received calls from said requester to an operator terminal (20).
99. The system in accordance with claim 97, further comprising an operator terminal (20) operated by a customer representative, so as to retrieve information stored in said database (18).
100. The system in accordance with claim 97, further comprising an automated operator terminal (20) so as to automatically retrieve information stored in said database (18).
101. The system in accordance with claim 97, wherein said special services include indication that a service is open 24 hours.

102. The system in accordance with claim 97, wherein said special services include indication that a service provides Spanish speaking personnel.

103. The system in accordance with claim 97, wherein said special services include indication that a service provides hearing impaired compatible information.

104. The system in accordance with claim 97, wherein said database directory listing further comprises a Device Capability field associated with capabilities of a wireless device corresponding to each one of said subscribers.

105. The system in accordance with claim 97, wherein said database directory listing further comprises a Defined Locality field associated with a subscriber's preferred locality.

106. The system in accordance with claim 97, wherein said database directory listing further comprises a Billing Information field associated with information corresponding with each one of said subscribers.

107. The system in accordance with claim 106 wherein said Billing Information field contains instructions associated with whether a requester or a subscriber is responsible for the billing on calls made by a requester to a subscriber.

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108. The system in accordance with claim 97, wherein said database directory listing includes a NPA/NXX field containing information indicating whether a requester is calling from a wireless device or a landline device.

109. The system in accordance with claim 97, wherein said database directory listing further includes a Pre-Announcement field containing information indicating whether a requester is pre-announced before a voice connection to a subscriber is made.

110. The system in accordance with claim 109, wherein said pre-announcement to said subscriber is in voice format.

111. The system in accordance with claim 109, wherein said pre-announcement to said subscriber is in text format.

112. The system in accordance with claim 109, wherein said Pre-Announcement field is defaulted to inactive when said requester is calling for a landline device and said Pre-Announcement field is defaulted to active when said requester is calling for a wireless device.

113. The system in accordance with claim 109, wherein said pre-announcement is made to a subscriber via audio and visual messages depending on said subscriber's preference.

114. The system in accordance with claim 109, further comprising a Voice Response Unit for storing pre-announcement messages that are played in accordance with information contained in said Pre-Announcement field.

115. The system in accordance with claim 114, wherein said Voice Response Unit stores a requester's message so as to announce said requester to a desired subscriber for acceptance of a call from said requester by said subscriber.

116. The system in accordance with claim 115, wherein said requester is prompted to leave a voice message, when said requester's call to said subscriber is not accepted.

117. A communication assistance system (2) for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers (6), the system comprising:

a telephone switch (12) for receiving calls from a plurality of requesters (4) desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers (6); and

a database directory listing (18) storing information corresponding to each one of said subscribers, said information including a Rate Plan field associated with billing rates corresponding to each one of said subscribers.



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118. The system in accordance with claim 117, further comprising a call center (16) coupled to said switch for routing each of said received calls from said requester to an operator terminal (20).

119. The system in accordance with claim 117, further comprising an operator terminal (20) operated by a customer representative so as to retrieve information stored in said database (18).

120. The system in accordance with claim 117, further comprising an automated operator terminal (20) so as to automatically retrieve information stored in said database (18).

121. The system in accordance with claim 117, wherein said Rate Plan field further comprises information relating to billing charges corresponding to various features associated with each one of said subscribers.

122. A communication assistance system (2) for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers (6), the system comprising:

a telephone switch (12) for receiving calls from a plurality of requesters (4) desiring access to said information corresponding to subscribers wherein said switch is configured to generate an incoming call information record containing a Feature Code field associated with a subscription rate plan corresponding to each one of said requesters (4) ; and

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a database (18) accessible by an operator terminal and configured to store said information corresponding to each of said subscribers, including phone numbers of each of said subscribers.

123. The system in accordance with claim 122, further comprising a call center (16) coupled to said switch for routing each of said received calls from said requester to an operator terminal (20).

124. The system in accordance with claim 122, further comprising an operator terminal (20) operated by a customer representative so as to retrieve information stored in said database (18).

125. The system in accordance with claim 122, further comprising an automated operator terminal (20) so as to automatically retrieve information stored in said database (18).

126. The system in accordance with claim 122, wherein said subscription rate plan includes a flat fee subscription fee corresponding to various features and services provided by said system.

127. The system in accordance with claim 126, wherein said flat fee varies depending on the type of services subscribed by the subscriber.

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128. A communication assistance system for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers, the system comprising:

a telephone switch (12) for receiving calls from a plurality of requesters desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers (6);

a first database configured to store said information corresponding to each of said subscribers, including phone numbers of each of said subscribers; and

a call completion table coupled to said telephone switch said call completion table containing least cost routing information for connecting said requesters to a desired subscriber.

129. The system in accordance with claim 128, further comprising a call center (16) coupled to said switch for routing each of said received calls from said requester to an operator terminal (20).

130. The system in accordance with claim 128, further comprising an operator terminal (20) operated by a customer representative so as to retrieve information stored in said database (18).

131. The system in accordance with claim 128, further comprising an automated operator terminal (20) so as to automatically retrieve information in said database (18).

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132. The system in accordance with claim 128, wherein said call completion table further includes information for said telephone switch so as to select an outbound trunk group deemed most efficient to route a call to a subscriber.

133. A communication assistance system (2) for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers (6), the system comprising:

a telephone switch (12) for receiving calls from a plurality of requesters desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers (6);

a first database (18) configured to store said information corresponding to each of said subscribers, including phone numbers of each of said subscribers;

a communications interface for receiving requests for directory assistance via a requester computer terminal; and

an access database containing a plurality of access numbers corresponding to phone listing of each one of said subscribers, so as to provide an assigned access number to a requester who is requesting a subscriber's telephone number.

134. The system in accordance with claim 133, further comprising a call center coupled to said switch for routing each of said received calls from said requester to an operator terminal.

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135. The system in accordance with claim 133, further comprising an operator terminal (20) operated by a customer representative so as to retrieve information stored in said database (18).

136. The system in accordance with claim 133, further comprising an automated operator terminal (20) so as to automatically retrieve information from said database (18).

137. The system in accordance with claim 133, further comprising means to provide said assigned access number to a communication terminal employed by said requester.

138. The system in accordance with claim 133, wherein said assigned access number when dialed provides access to said telephone switch and said access database, so as to retrieve a corresponding subscriber's phone number for call completion by said telephone switch.

139. The system in accordance with claim 138, wherein said communication terminal employed by said requester is a wireless handheld device.

140. The system in accordance with claim 138, wherein said communication terminal employed by said requester is a personal computer.

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141. A communication assistance system (2) for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers, the system comprising:
- a telephone switch (12) for receiving calls from a plurality of requesters (4) desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers (6);
  - a listing database (18) coupled to an operator terminal and configured to store said information corresponding to each of said subscribers, including phone numbers of each of said subscribers; and
  - a processor configured to transmit notification messages to an outbound telemarketing unit for obtaining listing updates for a plurality of subscribers designated by said processor.
142. The system in accordance with claim 141, further comprising a call center (16) coupled to said switch for routing each of said received calls from said requester to an operator terminal (20).
143. The system in accordance with claim 141, further comprising an operator terminal (20) operated by a customer representative to retrieve information stored in said database (18).
144. The system in accordance with claim 141, further comprising an automated operator terminal (20) so as to automatically retrieve information from said database (18).

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145. The system in accordance with claim 141, wherein said notification messages are transmitted when listings for said subscribers have not been updated for a period of time.

146. The system in accordance with claim 141, wherein said notification messages are transmitted when listings for said subscribers are incomplete.

147. The system in accordance with claim 141, wherein said notification messages are transmitted when listings for said subscribers are assigned to a group representative for a group of subscribers.

148. The system in accordance with claim 141, further comprising a service provider corresponding to said subscribers, said service provider including a database for maintaining listing data corresponding to each subscriber and said service provider further comprising means for providing notification messages corresponding to status of accounts of said subscribers.

149. The system in accordance with claim 148 wherein said status of accounts corresponds to activation, deactivation and modification of said accounts.

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150. A communication assistance system (2) for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers (6) , the system comprising:

- a telephone switch (12) for receiving calls from a plurality of requesters (4) desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers;
- a first database (18) coupled to an operator terminal (20) and configured to store said information corresponding to each of said subscribers, including phone numbers associated with each of said subscribers;
- a communications interface for database clean-up, said interface configured to receive instructions from said subscribers so as to allow said subscribers to modify their corresponding information in said first database; and
- a processor configured to transmit notification messages to said subscribers so as to receive updates for each listing corresponding to each one of said subscribers.

151. A communication assistance system (2) for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers (6) , the system comprising:

- a telephone switch (12) for receiving calls from a plurality of requesters (4) desiring access to said information corresponding to subscribers;
- a database directory listing (18) storing information corresponding to each one of said subscribers including their phone numbers, said information including a Special Services field associated with services provided by said subscriber, so as to allow a search of said database against any one of said services: and



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a dial string translator configured to receive dial strings dialed by each one of said plurality of requesters and translate said received dial strings to a corresponding digit sequence associated with a service provided by said communication assistance system.

152. A billing system for a communication assistance system that provides access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers (6), the system comprising:

a telephone switch (12) for receiving calls from a plurality of requesters (4) desiring access to said information corresponding to subscribers wherein said switch is configured to generate an incoming call information record containing a Feature Code field associated with a rate plan corresponding to each one of said requesters;

a database directory listing storing information corresponding to each one of said subscribers including their phone number, said information including a Rate Plan field associated with billing rates corresponding to each one of said subscribers; and

a billing record database coupled to said switch configured to store information corresponding to amount of time requester was connected to each one of said subscribers.

153. A communication assistance system for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers (6), the system comprising:

a telephone switch (12) for receiving calls from a plurality of requesters desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers;

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a first database (18) coupled to an operator terminal (20) and configured to store said information corresponding to each of said subscribers, including phone numbers of each of said subscribers;

a call completion table coupled to said telephone switch said call completion table containing least cost routing information for connecting said requesters to a desired subscriber; and

a closing prompt module coupled to said first database so as to generate a closing prompt code from a plurality of available closing prompt codes associated with a desired closing prompt message for said requesters.

154. A method of operating a communication assistance system for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving calls from a plurality of a requesters desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers at a telephone switch;

accessing a first database and retrieving said information corresponding to a subscriber, including phone numbers of each of said subscribers; and

generating a closing prompt code from a plurality of available closing prompt codes associated with a desired closing prompt message for said requesters.

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155. A method of operating a communication assistance system for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving calls from a plurality of requesters desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers at a telephone switch;

accessing a first database and retrieving said information corresponding to a subscriber, including phone numbers of each of said subscribers; and

receiving instructions from said subscribers so as to allow said subscribers to modify their corresponding information in said first database.

156. A method of operating a communication assistance system for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving calls from a plurality of requesters desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers at a telephone switch;

accessing a first database and retrieving said information corresponding to a subscriber, including phone numbers of each of said subscribers; and

receiving dial strings dialed by each one of said plurality of requesters and translating said received dial strings to a corresponding digit sequence associated with a service provided by said communication assistance system.

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157. A method of operating a billing system for a communication assistance system that provides access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving calls from a plurality of a requesters desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers at a telephone switch;

accessing a first database and retrieving said information corresponding to a subscriber, including phone numbers of each of said subscribers; and

storing information corresponding to said requester accessing said information and an amount of time said requester was connected to each one of said subscribers in a billing record database.

158. A method of operating a communication assistance system for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving calls from a plurality of a requesters desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers at a telephone switch; and

storing information in a listing database, corresponding to each of said subscribers, including phone numbers of each of said subscribers and instructions as to whether to disclose a subscriber's phone number to a requester .

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159. A method of operating a communication assistance system for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving calls from a plurality of a requesters desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers at a telephone switch;

storing information corresponding to each of said subscribers, including phone numbers of each of said subscribers ; and

transmitting notification messages to said subscribers so as to receive updates for each listing corresponding to each one of said subscribers.

160. A method of operating a communication assistance system for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving calls from a plurality of a requesters desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers at a telephone switch; and

storing information corresponding to each of said subscribers, including phone numbers of each of said subscribers and license plate number corresponding to said subscriber's vehicle in a first database coupled to an operator terminal.

161. A method of operating a communication assistance system for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers, said method comprising the steps of:

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receiving calls from a plurality of a requesters desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers at a telephone switch; and

storing information corresponding to each one of said subscribers in a database directory listing, said information including a Special Services field associated with services provided by said subscriber, so as to allow a search of said database against any one of said services.

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162. A method of operating a communication assistance system for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving calls from a plurality of a requesters desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers at a telephone switch; and

storing information corresponding to each one of said subscribers in a database directory listing, said information including a Rate Plan field associated with billing rates corresponding to each one of said subscribers.

163. A method of operating a communication assistance system for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving calls from a plurality of a requesters desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers at a telephone switch;

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generating an incoming call information record containing a Feature Code field associated with a subscription rate plan corresponding to each one of said requesters; and  
accessing a first database and retrieving said information corresponding to each of said subscribers, including phone numbers of each of said subscribers.

164. A method of operating a communication assistance system for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving calls from a plurality of requesters desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers at a telephone switch;

accessing a first database and retrieving said information corresponding to each of said subscribers, including phone numbers of each of said subscribers; and

maintaining least cost routing information for connecting said requesters to a desired subscriber.

165. A method of operating a communication assistance system for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving calls from a plurality of requesters desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers at a telephone switch;

accessing a first database and retrieving said information corresponding to each of said subscribers, including phone numbers of each of said subscribers;

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receiving requests for directory assistance via a requester communication device;  
and

maintaining a plurality of access numbers corresponding to phone listing of each one of said subscribers in an access database, so as to provide an assigned access number to a requester who is requesting a subscriber's telephone number, wherein said assigned access number disclosed to said requester is associated with subscriber's undisclosed telephone number.

166. A method of operating a communication assistance system for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving calls from a plurality of requesters desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers at a telephone switch;

storing information corresponding to each of said subscribers including phone numbers of each of said subscribers ; and

transmitting notification messages to an outbound telemarketing unit for obtaining listing updates for a plurality of subscribers.

167. A communication assistance system (2) for providing access to information corresponding to a plurality of subscribers (6), the system comprising:

a telephone switch (12) for receiving calls from a plurality of requesters (4) desiring to access said information corresponding to subscribers (6);



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a first database (18) configured to store said information corresponding to each of said subscribers (6), including phone numbers of each of said subscribers;

a voice response unit coupled to said first database configured to retrieve information from said first database in response to voice commands received from said requesters; and

a closing prompt module (27) coupled to said first database so as to generate a closing prompt code from a plurality of available closing prompt codes associated with desired closing prompt messages for said requesters(4).

168. The system according to claim 167, wherein said closing prompt messages are in accordance with a text format from a list of formats including WAP and SMS.

169. The system in accordance with claim 167, wherein said database further comprises a listing table 52(A) associated with each of said subscribers, said listing table further comprises a wireless phone number field adapted to store wireless phone numbers of said subscribers.